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Historical and Ideological Heritage in the Thought of Ayn Rand

*There are few discoveries more irritating than
those which disclose the origin of ideas.*

Lord Acton

Ayn Rand (1905–1982), whose real name was Alice Rosenbaum, is one of the most popular American writers of her time.¹ This Russian emigrant² is known not only as an author of fiction, but also as a philosopher.³ Within contemporary liberalism, she represents libertarianism.⁴ Ayn Rand popularized her own ideas in the magazines which she established, i.e. “The Objectivist Newsletter” and “The Ayn Rand Letter”, although the spirit of her philosophy of objectivism and absolute ethics pervades also in her literary works. Definitely this diversity of literary genres contributed to the popularization of the ideas represented by the author of *The Virtue of Selfishness*.⁵

It seems worthwhile to trace the philosophical origins of some of the theses presented by Ayn Rand. The continuity of some themes from the history of ideas appears to be a natural thing, although – on the other hand – as history indicates – it is not always obvious.⁶ The indication of some *continuum* of thought in the history of philosophical doctrines seems interesting as much as it allows one to grasp the fluctuation of ideas. Thus, it does not boil down to the analysis of differences, but to the awareness of the relationships between the concepts of Rand and the ideas of the classicists of thought.

Socrates is regarded as the father of the European history of ideas, therefore the analysis of historical and ideological heritage in the thought Ayn Rand should begin with him. A characteristic feature of the philosophy of this ancient thinker was, among others, “ethical intellectualism.” Socrates assumed that man, acting with his reason, acts well. He identified virtue with knowledge; yet virtue was not an “inborn knowledge, but an acquired one, which means that it could be learned.”⁷ Some similar theses can be encountered in the doctrine of the American writer. She is undoubtedly

¹ Her most popular works comprise a classic short story, *Anthem*, and the novels: *Atlas Shrugged* and *The Fountainhead*. Rand’s heritage comprises also film scripts (*Red Pawn*) and plays (*Night of January 16th*).

² She emigrated from Russia to the USA in 1926.

³ In Rand’s biographical notes one can read that she studied philosophy and history (she also attended the State Institute of Cinematographic Arts), although Ryszard Legutko, in one of his essays published in “Nowe Państwo” titled *Nieugięta i nieinteresująca*, suggests that the philosophical studies are only her invention.

⁴ Cf. J. Miklaszewska, *Libertariańskie koncepcje wolności i własności*, Kraków 1994; Z. Rau, *Liberalizm: zarys myśli politycznej XIX i XX wieku*, Warszawa 2000.

⁵ It should be mentioned here that currently the heritage of Ayn Rand is collected by the Ayn Rand Institute.

⁶ Many examples of thinkers who reached similar conclusions may be indicated here. It seems sufficient to quote Isaiah Berlin, who says directly that, irrespectively of Frederick Nietzsche and Max Weber, he reached the concept of the pluralism of values. Cf. *Pluralizm i jego wrogowie. Rozmowa Stevena Lukesa z Isaiahem Berlinem*, “Przegląd Polityczny” no. 54/2002, p. 127. Similarly, Oakshott and Hayek, irrespectively of each other, proposed a criticism of Cartesian philosophy at the same time.

⁷ S. Swieżawski, *Dzieje europejskiej filozofii klasycznej*, Warszawa 2000, p. 72.

close to ethical intellectualism in her assumption that we can acquire knowledge by means of our own efforts, and, as she frequently stresses, that man selects values in the process of conscious thinking.

Socrates formulates the principles of his ethics by means of reason. *Nota bene*, the confidence in logos is characteristic of the entire philosophy of this Athenian thinker, who is believed to have said that he would not obey anything or anyone, but the logos. The Randian concept of absolute ethics is also based on the belief in the power of reason.⁸ The author of *The Fountainhead* assumes that only a rational individual is able to achieve the state of being content: "Happiness can only be achieved by a rational individual, the individual who wants to search for rational values and finds joy in rational acting."⁹ It must also be noted here that the philosopher extends the notion of reasonable acting to the activities related to preserving life.

A common feature of both philosophies is the assumption that an individual who is directed in his life by reason tries to tame his impulses and not to yield to his caprices. For Socrates, the concept of the spirit was related to the notion of freedom, yet was understood as self-control, which can be opposed to being enslaved to one's own desires.¹⁰ The author of the *Anthem* advocates the same, believing that a rational individual does not pursue the fulfillment of his caprices or irrational instincts. If one acts differently, however, he "wants to eat the cake which he has already eaten, thus disintegrating his consciousness and changing his internal life into a civil war of blind forces entangled in dark, incoherent, aimless and empty conflicts."¹¹ What individuals who satisfy their momentary fancies feel is only a transient relief, but this is not the basic aim for a human being.

Another "Socratic" motif in the thought of the American writer is the notion of work. The ancient philosopher assumed that work (together with justice) marks the development of an individual. According to Rand "an effective work is the central aim of life of a rational individual, the central value integrating and determining the hierarchy of all other values."¹² However, the author of *We the Living* certainly would not agree with Socrates on the question of work useful for *polis* (there is a well-known question posed by the philosopher of whether free people should do nothing but eat and lie in bed). The Athenian philosopher pronounced his opinion about work in a period of slavery, as if against the spirit of his own times. Rand, however, on the contrary, fits into the dominating, capitalist trend of her own era, providing it with some ideological support.¹³

Finally the relationship between the thought of the writer and Socrates's doctrine can be indicated by her definition of her own ethics as "absolute." As it is known, the Athenian thinker claimed that ethical norms "stem from the nature of things, so he gave

⁸ The basic difference is certainly that the Athenian philosopher assumes the existence of the helpful *daimonion*, which is unacceptable.

⁹ A. Rand, *The Virtue of Selfishness: A New Concept of Egoism*. For the purposes of this paper the translation based on the edition of Oficyna Liberałów was used (Warszawa 1987) and of J. Łoziński, Poznań 2000, p. 32.

¹⁰ Cf. S. Swieżawski, *Dzieje...*, p. 72. Socrates assumed that yielding to weaknesses and impulses can be explained only by unawareness, which is related to the assumption that to know what is good means *de facto* to do what is good.

¹¹ A. Rand, *The Virtue of Selfishness*, p. 31.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 27.

¹³ Cf. R. Legutko, *Spory o kapitalizm*, Kraków 1994.

them some absolute, universal, common and lasting value, irrespective of the will of one or another legislator.”¹⁴ In spite of some obvious differences, the fact that the writer derives her “Absolute” from the “nature of things” is close to Socrates’s philosophy. She assumes thus that an individual is “by his own nature” doomed to preserve his own life, from which it stems that all actions aiming at its maintenance are good. Therefore, one deals with some kind of absolute in Rand’s thought – this is life, the ultimate value.

Another ancient philosopher whose influence is very strong in Ayn Rand’s thought is Aristotle. She directly quotes the Aristotelian principle of identity: “A basic indication in the process of defining one’s interests by a rational person is the principle of identity (A is A).”¹⁵ The essayist identifies the rational attitude with the Stagira philosopher’s assumption that “a thing is identical with itself.” An individual acting in accordance with this criterion acts in a rational way; he reckons that things, principles, etc. remain themselves; he lives in accordance with the logic of reality. Irrational thinkers, in turn, reject the Aristotelian principle of identity and acknowledge the fact that things may change depending on meanings ascribed to them. They remain the same in the sphere of illusion without recognition of reality.¹⁶

The echo of Aristotelian beliefs sounds also in Rand’s criticism of altruism. According to the author of the *Ethics of Critical Situations*, altruism causes a psychological conflict into which an individual gets while facing a dilemma: “Should one endanger his own life in order to help a man who: a) is drowning, b) is cut off by a fire, c) is walking directly into the path of an oncoming, d) is hanging over a cliff clenching the edge with his nails?”¹⁷ According to the philosopher, an altruist attitude assumes that respect for another person means to forget about oneself and to devote oneself to others. Individuals who don’t approve of this philosophy and who escape into the attitude of a rebellion against self-sacrifice, preaching an absolute indifference towards others, are, as she calls it, creating dehumanizing altruism.¹⁸ A human being is therefore torn and faces the dilemma of “a false dichotomy of altruism”: either to devote oneself to others or to become indifferent towards them. Yet, Rand indicates an amicable solution – an individual may help others without sacrifice. The compromising solution brings to one’s mind the Aristotelian principle of the golden mean. According to Stagira’s philosopher, “ethical courage is a permanent disposition to some kind of decisions consisting in keeping an average measure, appropriate with respect to ourselves and which is determined by the reason.”¹⁹ A golden mean is a solution between two extremes, and as the author of the *Politics* claimed, all extremes are bad. For Rand, altruism is, first of all, an ethical extreme, and, secondly, it does not correspond to human nature. In this sense it is closer to the Aristotelian idea of virtue

¹⁴ G.L. Seidler, *Przedmarksowska myśl polityczna*, Kraków 1974, p. 113.

¹⁵ A. Rand, *The Virtue of Selfishness*, p. 60.

¹⁶ This is discussed in detail in Z. Rau, *Liberalizm...*, p. 176.

¹⁷ A. Rand, *The Virtue of Selfishness*, p. 50.

¹⁸ The writer’s attitude in this respect is presented in the novel *Atlas Shrugged*, in which Rand justifies why a human being is not – as she defines it – “an animal of sacrifice”, and why helping others is not an ethical obligation.

¹⁹ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, II, 6 (1107a). Here a Polish translation was used: translation by D. Gromska, Warszawa 1996, p. 113.

as a permanent penchant for maintaining the golden mean, where bravery is the golden mean between impudence and cowardice.²⁰

Aristotle's ethics are defined as consistent eudaimonism with an intellectualist character.²¹ This stems from the fact that the Stagira philosopher saw happiness "in life conformant with the essence and destiny of an individual endowed with reason."²² The essayist efforts made by Rand are directed at such an aim. The writer wants to illustrate the fact that an individual living according to the principles conforming to his own nature is a happy individual²³ (these should not be the principles resulting from abstract social norms or the *forces majeure*), so also in accordance with reason.

The separation of economics as a new branch of knowledge is attributed to the thinkers of ancient Greece – Xenophon, Plato and Aristotle – whilst in the work of the latter, economic knowledge found its most complete expression. The exemplary object for the Stagira philosopher was the family community, since in this example, on a smaller scale, the elements of general social theory can be seen. In this community, two economic aspects are visible: work exchange and work division. Both issues are Archimedes's Points in Ayn Rand's theory. The principle of work exchange is for her "the only rational ethical principle in the sphere of human, personal and social, private and public, spiritual and material relationships."²⁴ She perceives the work division, in turn, as a "great advantage," as it makes it possible for everyone to concentrate their effort in one concrete sphere and establish relationships with those specialize in other spheres."²⁵ Aristotle relates the issues which – in the above-quoted fragment – are also related to each other in the case of the American writer, as these are economic, political and moral-ethical issues.²⁶

The strongest ideological connection can be seen – which seems obvious – between the thought of Ayn Rand and the trend of liberalism. Although the indication of common themes between the concepts of the American writer and the doctrines of the classics of liberalism is not difficult at all for a historian of ideas, the search for a philosophical relationship between the precursors of liberal thought is not that simple. Therefore it seems more interesting to trace less obvious affiliations of the concepts of this representative of liberalism with ancestors of the liberal doctrine than to analyze the connections with the most prominent representatives of liberalism. Some liberal themes had appeared already in antiquity, for example in the individualist features of sophists, epicureans or stoics. However, it was with the thinkers of the 17th century that the foundations of liberal thought were prepared: this was "on the one hand, a modern school of the law of nature, with its most prominent representatives such as Huig de

²⁰ Ibidem, II, 7 (1107b), s. 115.

²¹ Cf. T. Banaszczyk, *Studia z Arystotelesowskiej teorii społeczno-politycznej*, Katowice 1985, p. 15.

²² Ibidem.

²³ The subject of these reflections is not the differences, but ideological proximity of some concepts of Rand, which is why the notion of *zōon politikón* was overlooked, as well as the question of the identity of human and state welfare, and also the extremely different attitude represented by Aristotle when he claims that the welfare of the state is greater and more beautiful than the welfare of an individual. Cf. (Cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, I, 2, (1094 b), p. 78 [in Polish translation]).

²⁴ A. Rand, *The Virtue of Selfishness*, p. 35. The consequences of translating the economic principle of exchange to all spheres of life were discussed in my article *Idee Hobbesowskie w etyce absolutnej Ayn Rand*.

²⁵ Ibidem, p. 37.

²⁶ Cf. T. Banaszczyk, *Studia...*, p. 19.

Groot, known as Grotius (1583–1645), and Samuel Pufendorf (1632–1694), on the other – the philosophy of Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) and Benedict Spinoza (1632–1677).²⁷

Such postulates of the school of nature as Grotius's integrity of somebody else's property or his theory of subject rights bring to mind the libertarian doctrine of the author of the *Anthem*. It is however worthwhile to emphasize another characteristic feature of the school of the law of nature – rationalism. Under the influence of the progress in learning, it was claimed, among other, things that *ratio* may allow us to know and categorize nature's laws. Grotius's definition of the natural law which is the imperative of legal reason, indicating that some deed resulting from conformity with reasonable nature has some features of necessity, is commonly known. Rationalism, as it has already been stated here a few times, is also inherent in Rand's doctrine. Another element close to the author of *For the New Intellectual* is the elimination of the religious influence or revealed truths from learning. The writer especially refers with some reserve to all theories that are – as she calls them – mystical, which, for her, were “unpractical, not only in the content, but also in the method and approach.”²⁸ The thought of a German representative of the school of the law of nature – Samuel Pufendorf – can also be characterised with the cult of *ratio*. However, this historiographer of the Berlin court observed also that apart from social instinct, egoism is also inherent in human nature. However, one of the assumptions of Ayn Rand's absolute ethics is the statement that an individual is selfish by his own nature. This is related to another prerequisite of the writer's thinking, namely that by caring to preserve our lives we are the beneficiaries of our own actions.

Such scientists as, for example, John Gray, Michael Oakshott or Leo Strauss regard Thomas Hobbes²⁹ as one of the first representatives of liberalism. The author of *The Leviathan* is considered to be the pioneer of liberalism, mainly thanks to his doctrine of uncompromising individualism. Extreme individualism is seen with its entire strength in the Hobbesian state of nature, in which an individual perceives sustaining himself to be the basic value, and therefore individually judges what is good or bad for him.³⁰ Such a state of affairs is characteristic before concluding a social contract, whilst after the contract it is law that becomes the point of reference of individual actions. Hobbes, however, observes that even in the state life it is difficult to get rid of individualist thinking, which *notabene* may threaten the state.³¹ An extreme individualism is also typical of Ayn Rand's philosophy. In her short story, *Anthem*, which is a prelude to her most famous novel, *Atlas Shrugged*, the writer proves that all attempts at introducing collectivist thought are always doomed to fail. Individualism in an individual cannot be destroyed – it is not harmed even when language is stripped of a singular pronoun and people think about themselves only as “we” (the characters are “de-individualized” by being given names such as Equality 7-2521 or Unification 5-3992). In the final part of the novel, it turns out that the god who has been sought “by

²⁷ Z. Rau, *Liberalizm...*, p. 11.

²⁸ A. Rand, *The Virtue of Selfishness*, p. 39.

²⁹ The relations between Rand's concept and Hobbes's doctrine were discussed in detail in my article *Idee Hobbesowskie w etyce absolutnej Ayn Rand*. Here I would like to mention only its most important theses.

³⁰ Cf. T. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Polish translation by Cz. Znamierowski, Kraków 1954, p. 45.

³¹ Cf. *ibidem*, pp. 607–608.

people since the onset of their existence” is one word: “ME.”³² Rand convinces readers that all anti-individualist doctrines are “the religion of misdeed,” the reason for evil on earth, “the source of all tortures and undescribed lies.”³³ Another book by Rand – the novel *The Fountainhead* – has also become an expression of individualist ethics (represented by the main character, Howard Roark). Also in this book, the writer expresses her resentment towards all false – as she calls them – “social ethics,” in which the individual is “merely a small particle of a large social machine.”³⁴ The plot of the novel aims to show the conflict between thinking in general and individual categories, whilst the author expressly favors the latter. A systematic presentation of the individualistic attitude represented by Rand can be found in the essay “Absolute Ethics.” The philosopher claims that human life is some general example which we fill with our own individual existence.³⁵

The notion of individualism is related to that of selfishness. This notion is a rudimental question in the doctrine of the author of *Night of January 16th* – it is present not only in the title of the famous collection of her essays (*The Virtue of Selfishness: a New Concept of Egoism*), but also completes the plot of her short story, *Anthem*. The author of *The Return of a Primitive Man* separates herself from negative associations with the term “egoism” and refers directly to the semantics of this word. For Rand, egoism is the care for one’s own interest and it, as such, does not contain moral evaluation, as it does not define what individual interest is.³⁶ The issue of egoism is present also in the philosophy of the 17th-century thinker: it is, among other things, egoism that leads to *bellum omnium contra omnes* (hence the conclusion, different from Rand’s thinking, that the existence of the Leviathan is necessary³⁷). Undoubtedly, in both doctrines the notion of egoism is meaningful, yet with Hobbes the assumption of human egoistic nature is a starting point, a statement resulting from observation, something that must be tamed, whereas for Rand, to the contrary, this is an ethical postulate.

Archimedes’s Point both in the doctrine of the author of *For the New Intellectual* and in that of the author of *Behemoth* is the right to live (self-preservation instinct). Rand claims that the model of value for an individual is life, whilst the reason suggests what to do to preserve it. She says directly that “the basic method of survival is the reason.”³⁸ If we make an evaluation of what is good and what is bad, we do this through the perspective of what is necessary for an individual to exist as a rational being. This is no different in the doctrine of Hobbes, where a basic category is the right to live. Similarly here, the reason plays the key role: it finds the law of nature which forbids an individual to do what is destructive for his life and takes away his means to preserve life; it orders him what to do to preserve life in the best way.³⁹ Therefore, the thought common for Rand and for Hobbes is the thought that life is the most prominent

³² A. Rand, *Anthem*, Polish translation by S. Bijak, Poznań 2001, p. 87.

³³ Ibidem, p. 86.

³⁴ A. Rand, *The Fountainhead*, Polish translation by I. Michałowska, Poznań 2002, p. 32.

³⁵ Cf. A. Rand, *The Virtue of Selfishness*, p. 27.

³⁶ Cf. ibidem, p. 5.

³⁷ Cf. T. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 109.

³⁸ A. Rand, *The Virtue of Selfishness*, p. 22.

³⁹ Cf. T. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 119.

value and that the reason allows an individual to exist, since it performs the service function in relation to the self-preservation instinct.

A natural sequence of things is to pass from the influence of Hobbes's ideas to the presence in the thought of Ayn Rand of Spinoza's philosophy, remaining under the influence of the English philosopher. Especially one feature of the Dutch thinker seems worth stressing here, as it is close to the assumptions of the author of *The Voice of Reason*, namely, the confidence in human reason.⁴⁰ According to the author of *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, it is why the state of nature is preoccupied with mutual hostility and fear, as nature is not subject to the laws of reason⁴¹. Moreover, according to Spinoza the one who lives in accordance with the principles of the reason is free⁴². Also the American writer many times expresses her belief in reasonability of human actions. This is most clearly seen in her confidence about safety of rational interests. According to Rand, a individual who perceives his interests in a rational way, is a individual who considers four interrelated questions: the reality, context, responsibility and effort, where human interest depends "on the type of aims which he decides to pursue, the type of aims depends on the desires, desires on the values, and the values believed in by a rational individual depend on his mind".⁴³ Everything thus is based on *ratio*.

Another Spinozian theme related to Rand's doctrine is the recognition of freedom of belief as the basic right of human nature. Rand expressed this many times, not only in the magazines which she created, but also in her works of fiction.

Finally, an idea proposed by Spinoza, influenced by his own experiences (and also one popularized by the Russian emigrant in Rand) was secularization of political doctrine; let's add that it was the second one after Grotius. The author of *The Ethics* seems to be an example of tolerance juxtaposed against the background of his times preoccupied with the spirit of fanaticism. Yet Rand's criticism was directed against all the "mystical" systems, whose believers regarded "God's Will arbitrarily impossible to be explained" as an "example of good."⁴⁴

The name of the other thinker is quoted by Rand herself in her own essays. This is Frederick Nietzsche. In this case there is a discrepancy between the writer's attitude to the philosophy of the author of *The Will to Power* and opinions of the academics examining the relations between her concepts and Nietzschean ideas. Rand presents *expressis verbis* her attitude towards Nietzsche's opinions in the introduction to the collection titled *The Virtue of Selfishness*. She wants to avoid misunderstandings of the concept of absolute ethics, in which she claims, among other things, that "man should act in accordance with his rational interest."⁴⁵ This assumption is not synonymous with following all impulses and caprices – one's own interest is defined by means of a rational, objectively presented code of ethical principles.⁴⁶ "Nietzschean egoists," in

⁴⁰ It is known that Spinoza, in his education, was influenced by Descartes; therefore he ascribed such a great role to the *ratio*.

⁴¹ Cf. B. Spinoza, *Political Treatise*, Polish translation by I. Halpern, Warszawa 2002, p. 30.

⁴² Spinoza, differently than Rand, believed that the conditions for freedom and happiness are provided for the individual by the state.

⁴³ A. Rand, *The Virtue of Selfishness*, p. 59.

⁴⁴ Cf. p. 13.

⁴⁵ Ibidem, p. 9.

⁴⁶ Cf. ibidem.

turn – according to the author of *Capitalism* – assume that all actions, regardless of their nature, are good provided that they are directed at one's own benefit. Rand definitely rejects these kinds of philosophies; according to her, the criterion of moral value cannot consist in satisfying the irrational impulses of others or the pursuit of one's own irrational caprices: "Morality is not a contest of impulses."⁴⁷

The writer's critical attitude to the nihilism represented by the author of *Ecce homo* becomes understandable in light of Nietzsche's criticism of Socratean philosophy. The Athenian philosopher, quoted at the beginning of this paper, respected, first of all, logos, to which Ayn Rand also refers in her doctrine. The German thinker of the end of the 19th century, in turn, was quite reserved towards rational philosophy, especially Greek, which he identified with Socrates; according to Nietzsche, it was this philosophy which contributed to the fall of tragedy.⁴⁸

Why thus should we point out an ideological relationship between Rand and Nietzsche? One of the reasons for this is the division of people into two categories: rational, active, free, responsible, moral and self-reliant; and irrational, passive, superstitious, and directed by the coercion of the state and the mechanism of religion to satisfy their desires. The first group of people brings to mind Nietzsche's superman,⁴⁹ who is characterized by entire freedom, strength, vitality and power.⁵⁰ The other category comprises the common people opposed to the *Übermensch*, a mass individual yielding to the dictation of some god or cultivating the morality of weakness and pity.⁵¹ Rand, similarly to the author of *Beyond Good and Evil*, definitely rejected all doctrines based on the belief in an abstract god and she passionately fought against altruist theories. Also, her emphasis on individualism was close to the idea of the superman: "each human being is an independent and sovereign being,"⁵² therefore, a community has no other rights apart from the individual rights of its particular members.

A typically Nietzschean action was her attempt at a "re-evaluation of values" including the attempt to give a new meaning to the notion of egoism (by means of a direct reference to its etymology) and casting some new light onto altruist attitudes.

Both the American thinker and the German philosopher distinctly stressed volitional elements – in her opinion, our will distinguishes us from other species, and it is the will which makes humans exceptional.⁵³ In Nietzsche's opinion, the will is the starting point of all thought and all action. What is significant is that it is directed at one aim, very close to Rand's assumptions: self-sustaining.⁵⁴

In fine the key for the selection of the thinkers reflecting the origin of Ayn Rand's beliefs must be presented. These reflections are located in two historical and ideological trends. The first one was indicated by the writer herself; it comprises

⁴⁷ Ibidem.

⁴⁸ Cf. F. Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy or the Greeks and Pessimism*, Polish translation by B. Baran, Kraków 1994.

⁴⁹ Cf. Z. Rau, *Liberalizm*..., p. 177.

⁵⁰ These features definitely belong to Howard Roark – the main character of Rand's cult novel, *The Fountainhead*.

⁵¹ Cf. F. Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Polish translation by W. Berent, Warszawa 1990.

⁵² A. Rand, *The Virtue of Selfishness*, p. 155.

⁵³ Ibidem, p. 20.

⁵⁴ Apart from this aim, Nietzsche enumerates others as well: the increase of the sense of living and the ability to it or the victory of strength and power. Cf. F. Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, Polish translation by S. Frycz, K. Drzewiecki, Warszawa 1984.

Aristotle and Nietzsche. The other trend results from Rand's association with libertarianism – one of the branches of liberalism. However, the connections of the author of the *Anthem* with the ideas of the most prominent representatives of liberal philosophy were too obvious to be discussed here. With respect to this, this paper contains only Rand's connections with ancestors of the doctrine of liberalism: with the representatives of the school of the law of nature – Grotius and Pufendorf, Hobbes and Spinoza. The essay opened with Socrates; this was dictated, first of all, by the fact that he is considered to be the creator of the history of ideas. Therefore, chronologically speaking, it is with the Athenian philosopher that the analysis should begin.

It is worth mentioning that historical-ideological heritage is also present in Ayn Rand's use of literary form, which "Greek philosophers used since the times of Socrates and Aristotle in order to encourage and persuade people to adopt their way of life."⁵⁵ Rand uses it also, intending to propagate her philosophy of objectivism. Also in this sense she uses the achievements of the classic philosophers.

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⁵⁵ W. Jaeger, *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia*, Polish translation by K. Bielawski, Bydgoszcz 2002, p. 75.